

Spotlight

Mayor's Office
for Senior Citizens

A publication
of Seattle's
Human Services
Department

Spring 2011

We need to hear from you!

by Mayor Mike McGinn, Mayor of Seattle



We need your input and good ideas!

The Seattle Human Services Department's Aging & Disability Services (ADS) will soon kick off the planning process for the 2012–2015 Area Plan on Aging for King County. I'd like to invite

you to participate by filling out the survey on pages 5 and 6 of this newsletter. The Area Plan helps ADS identify key strategies that will promote quality of life, independence and choice for older people and adults with disabilities. The survey will inform the development of the Area Plan.

I especially encourage residents who are age 60 and older or adults with disabilities to respond. The survey will also be posted at www.agingkingcounty.org. The deadline for survey response is May 20, 2011.

I am proud that Seattle is a great place for older adults to live well. The Area Plan process helps shape partnerships with agencies and programs such as those listed below.

- **Active Options** is a Healthy Aging Partnership online tool to help seniors find programs that promote health and activity.
- The **Congregate Meals Program** provides nutritional meals, nutrition education and social and fitness activities to adults 60 and over in a group setting.

- The **Healthy Aging Partnership** is a coalition of more than 30 nonprofit and government organizations working together to promote healthy aging.

- **PEARLS** is the Program to Encourage Active, Rewarding Lives for Seniors, offered by the Seattle Human Services Department's Aging & Disability Services.

- **Project Enhance** is a fitness and wellness program offered to older adults by Senior Services.

- The **Senior Farmer's Market Program** provides fresh fruits and vegetables to seniors and supports local sustainable agriculture.

- **Sound Steps** is a physical activity program offered to organizations by the Healthy Aging Partnership, of which Aging & Disability Services is a member.

We look forward to hearing from you. For more information about Aging & Disability Services and the Area Plan, please visit www.agingkingcounty.org/area_plan.htm, e-mail karen.winston@seattle.gov, or call 206-684-0500.

Changing faces at seattle senior centers

by Cynthia Ellison, Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens

The year 2011 marks the year the oldest members of the baby boom generation (those born between 1946 -1964) turn 65. By 2025, almost 23% of the total population in King County will be age 60 or older. This demographic trend will pose great demand for services that help persons over 65 live healthy and active lives. For the moment, however, senior centers are experiencing a decline in daily attendance with a majority of participants being "older old" persons. Many senior centers are facing this challenge by devising new ways to become relevant to the new generation of older adults.

The boomer generation is a diverse group of people with common characteristics such as being independent, work-centric, goal-oriented and competitive. Seattle area senior centers have retooled their offerings and the following are some examples of exciting new programming.

One activity at the **Southeast Seattle Senior Center (SESSC)** includes reaching out to younger community members, both as volunteers and participants, in an attempt to be more inviting and inclusive. In one joint effort, seniors worked alongside youth to create a mural about the lives of people in the Rainier Valley. In addition to



Northwest Senior Center A "Dinner in Spain" event was a hit at the Northwest Senior Center.

working with youth, SESSC is reaching out to baby boomers by offering Zumba dance/aerobic classes in the evenings. As the center celebrates its 50th anniversary, many members have commented on how the center helped sustain their connections with friends through trips and activities.

To many who live in the Central District, the **Central Area Senior Center** is known as "The Central." Members enjoy their discussion groups, dance classes and recreational field trips. One special feature of the center is Café Central, the in-house kitchen that serves hot meals five days a week including soul food on Tuesdays and Thursdays and monthly birthday lunches. All meals are prepared from scratch. The Central's Green Dolphin Street Lounge is a monthly jazz club with local talent, a wonderful buffet and a happy hour format. Green Dolphin Street is only one of the center's efforts to reach the 50+ community.



A fun dance class for the Central Sliders.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

continued from page 2

At **Ballard Senior Center**, known as the “friendly center,” members enjoy the Enhance Wellness program, designed for multigenerational older adults from age 50 to 100 who want to live healthier lives. Wednesday is a favorite day with



Over 140 seniors attended the annual meeting at Southeast Seattle Senior Center.

relaxing chair massages and a dinner followed by a movie, bingo or classes. Members can also attend various weekly exercise classes. Laughter Yoga is popular. Naturopathic help provided by Bastyr University staff is a Friday favorite.

There are nine senior centers in Seattle—Ballard, Central, Greenwood, International Drop-In Center, Pike Market, Southeast, South Park, Wallingford, and West Seattle. Activities include dance classes, language classes, exercise programs, computer classes, card clubs, guitar lessons, and physical activities such as aerobics and chair exercises. Older adults also enjoy wonderful outdoor recreational activities that can include

trips to casinos, museums, parks, shopping and other interests.

Senior centers in Seattle will continue to change. In 2010, the Human Services Department Aging and Disability Services (HSD/ADS) recommended that Seattle City Council enact the following policy statement with respect to services to Seattle seniors: “the City of Seattle recognizes older adults as a vital asset to a vibrant community and is committed to:

- Promoting an environment which supports and sustains people in their communities through all life stages and improves their quality of life;
- Creating opportunities for lifelong civic and social engagement; and
- Support activities that encourage healthy, active living.”

Currently, Seattle Parks Lifelong Recreation staff are exploring ways to increase partnerships between the City’s community centers and senior centers as Seattle Parks and Recreation examines the future management, operations, staffing and support for its community centers.

One thing is certain: senior centers are making a difference in the lives of the people they serve. “My husband passed away and if I didn’t come to the center each day, I would be miserable and lonely,” said one senior center member. “The center has saved my life and now I enjoy meeting my friends every day!”

To find a senior center near you, call the Mayor’s Office for Senior Citizens’ Senior Information and Assistance Program at 206-684-0500. ●

Older Adults and others can use their skills at senior centers

Some volunteer opportunities include:

- *Receptionist -- answer phones and greet people at the front desk*
- *Office -- filing, bookkeeping or work behind the scenes in other areas*
- *Kitchen Worker -- help serve or prepare the lunch*
- *Newsletter Distribution/Mailing -- help prepare the newsletter or mailing*

Exercise for the body and brain

by Julie Moorer, R.N., Memory Wellness Program,
University of Washington & VA Puget Sound Health Care System

The Memory Wellness Program (MWP) of the University of Washington and the VA Medical Centers in Seattle and in Tacoma studies the relationship between cognitive abilities and how the body and brain use sugar and insulin.

Research from our group and from other scientists across the country indicates that there are strong ties between the body's metabolism, especially poor blood sugar control, and cognitive decline in older adults.

Impaired glucose tolerance, or prediabetes, is associated with an increased risk of cognitive decline, such as Alzheimer's disease. In Washington state, almost half of people over age 50 have prediabetes. People with mild cognitive problems involving memory and thinking that are worse than might be expected for someone of the same age, are also at increased risk of continued cognitive decline. Our team of neuropsychologists, doctors, nurses, and technical staff examine the effects of different types of interventions that hold promise for improving cognitive function for these "at risk" older adults.

In some of our studies, we examine how metabolism and blood sugar control or influence memory by directly altering the supply of insulin to the body and brain, or by increasing the body's sensitivity to insulin so that metabolism and blood sugar control is improved. We are also investigating more natural interventions, such as the effects of diet and exercise.

To date, our group has completed two exercises and memory studies. These studies examined the relationship between aerobic exercise, memory, and other thinking abilities in older adults with either prediabetes or mild memory problems. The results of these studies were promising and suggest that exercise is good for the body and the brain.



We have recently launched two additional studies to examine the benefits of low and high intensity exercise on the brain. In one study, we are looking at the effect of physical activity in older adults with mild declines in memory and in blood sugar control. In the second study, we will test whether low- or

high-intensity exercise improves thinking abilities for adults with mild Parkinson's disease. For both studies, we will also test whether exercise has a positive influence on chemicals in the blood, including insulin and glucose, and on chemicals that bathe the brain. In these studies, our examination of these chemicals may tell us more about why exercise is beneficial for the body and also for the brain.

Eligible research participants will receive a brief memory evaluation, a six-month membership to a local YMCA, and supervision by a fitness trainer. For more information about these studies or to find out if you qualify to participate, call Julie Moorer, R.N. at 866-638-8813 or go to www.memorywellness.org on the Web.





City of Seattle
Mike McGinn, Mayor
Seattle Human Services Department



Aging and Disability Services
Area Agency on Aging for Seattle and King County

2011 Area Plan on Aging Questionnaire

Your responses will support development of the 2012-2015 Area Plan on Aging. For more information, call 206-684-0708, (TTY 206-684-0702), e-mail karen.winston@seattle.gov or visit www.agingkingcounty.org. Mail to: Karen Winston, ADS/HSD, PO BOX 34215, Seattle, WA 98124-4215 (or fax to 206-684-0689).
Due date: May 20, 2011.

Identify Top Needs

What do you think the top three needs are for older adults?

What do you think the top three needs are for adults with disabilities?

Caregiving

Do you currently provide care for a family member, friend, or loved one? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you need help with any of the following?(check all that apply) ☐ Information and assistance

- ☐ Caregiver training ☐ A break from caregiving a few hours per week or month ☐ Help with caregiving
☐ Other: _____

Transportation

How do you get where you need to go? (check all that apply) ☐ Drive ☐ Family or friends

☐ Metro ☐ Access or other community transit program ☐ Taxi

☐ Volunteer transportation program

☐ Other: _____

What is your biggest transportation challenge?

Housing

What is your current housing arrangement?(check one) ☐ Live alone ☐ Live with spouse/partner

☐ Live with non-family ☐ Live with adult children ☐ Live with other family member (e.g. aunt/uncle, sister/brother)

How satisfied are you with your current housing arrangement? ☐ Very satisfied

☐ Somewhat satisfied ☐ Not very satisfied

What problems, if any, do you have with your current housing situation?

2011 Area Plan on Aging Questionnaire - continued from page 3

Food Security

How do you get the food you eat? (check all that apply)

- ☐ Grocery store ☐ Senior home delivered meals ☐ Farmers market ☐ Food bank
- ☐ Other home-delivered meals (e.g., Amazon Fresh, grocery store deliveries)
- ☐ Community or congregate meal program ☐ Other (friends, family, housing facility, restaurants)

Healthy Aging

Do you participate in wellness programs, such as exercise or health promotion? ☐ Yes ☐ No

What type of wellness class do you attend? (check all that apply) ☐ Exercise

☐ Managing chronic illnesses ☐ Memory improvement ☐ Other: _____

If not, what keeps you from participating?

Is there anything that you would change or improve? _____

Information & Assistance

How do you get your information about aging programs and/or services?

- ☐ Family ☐ Television ☐ Radio ☐ Newspaper ☐ Church or community bulletins
- ☐ Friends or neighbors

Livable Communities

Are you able to get around in your neighborhood without a car? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If no, are there any concerns that may prevent you from walking in your neighborhood?

- ☐ Poor lighting ☐ No crosswalks ☐ Poor or no sidewalks ☐ Personal safety
- ☐ Physical ability ☐ Few amenities near my home ☐ Other: _____

What would you like to add to your community or neighborhood that would make it more comfortable/livable for older adults and people with disabilities? _____

Demographic Information

What is your gender? ☐ Female ☐ Male ☐ Other

How old are you? ☐ Under 50 ☐ Age 50-59 ☐ Age 60 to 74 ☐ Age 75 to 84 ☐ Age 85 or older

What Seattle-King County neighborhood do you live in?

What is your current zip code? _____

Your e-mail address (optional): _____

Senior Information and Assistance—sharing knowledge among older adults

by Alain Rhone, Senior Information and Assistance Advocate, Senior Services

With high unemployment, government funding cuts to critical programs, and medical, rent and utility costs continuing to rise, people frequently contact the Senior Information and Assistance Program with concerns about how they are going to survive.

Some of the best advice has come from people who have gone through hard times themselves. The Senior Information and Assistance program connected the individuals featured below with programs to save them money on food, utilities, dental care and housing, and they agreed to share their own secrets to longevity and a good life. Their names have been changed to protect their privacy.

Fay Manalo, age 91, born in the Philippines, says that longevity runs in her family. “My grandfather was 105 years old when he passed away,” says Fay. “His brain was still active and he volunteered at Veterans hospital and worked in the payroll unit.”

One of Fay’s secrets to good health is to carefully choose the food she eats. “I eat a lot of vegetables, fish and brown rice,” she says. “I find that natural, pure foods cost less in the long-run than packaged products.” She also takes advantage of the state Department of Social and Health Services’ Basic Food program and the summer Farmer’s Market voucher program to help with her budget.

Another secret to her good health is getting plenty of sleep, including a daytime nap. “It rests the heart and the mind,” she says.

Fay stays warm to keep her arthritis at bay, but heating bills have been higher lately. The Federal Low-Income Heating Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) helps greatly by giving her a credit on her heating bills.



Ray Jones, 101 years old, lives independently in a senior apartment, and gets around on a Metro bus and an electric scooter. A positive attitude and pride in his country have helped him live well. “People can say what they want, but this country is one of the best places on the earth,” he says. Ray strongly believes in preserving Medicare and is in good communication with his doctors. “I follow my doctor’s advice and if I change something on my own, I let

them know,” says Ray.

Ray recently received a new set of dentures, and though appreciative of his new smile, he admits that he can’t eat everything he’d like to. “My advice is to keep your good teeth and have them fixed. It’s bad on your health if you have bad teeth. Once they are gone you cannot get them back,” he says.

For Fay and Ray, persistence in reaching their personal goals have paid off in longevity and health. As Noni puts it, “I refuse to give up.”

For more information about Senior Information and Assistance, call the Mayor’s Office for Senior Citizens at 206-684-0500 or go to www.seattle.gov/seniors.



continued on next page

Basic Food Program Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS)

Provides a monthly allowance toward the cost of food, via a debit card. The benefit amount varies based on income, expenses and household size. No age requirements; income maximum \$1,805 per month for one person, \$2,429 per month for two persons. Apply online at www.foodhelp.wa.gov or call 1-877-501-2233 for an application.

Farmer's Market Nutrition Program

Provides a \$40 voucher toward the purchase of food at participating Farmer's Market locations. Must be Age 60+ (or 55+ if Native American), income under \$1,671/month for one person or \$2,268/month for two persons. **Only one application per household.** Applications are available starting April 15. Completed applications must be postmarked by May 27. Apply online at www.agingkingcounty.org or call the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens at 206-684-0500 or Senior Information and Assistance 206-448-3110 for application.

Federal Energy Assistance Program

Eligible applicants can receive an annual grant to help with winter heating costs (electricity, gas, oil, wood or propane). The amount varies based on previous bills, with a maximum of \$1,000. No age requirements. Income maximum is \$1,135/month for one person, \$1,533/month for two persons. Call 1-800-348-7144 to apply.

Washington State Dental Association Dental Outreach Program

Provides a 25% discount on dental services with participating private dentists. Must be age 60+ or disabled, income under \$24,500 per year for one person, or under \$33,000 for two or more people. Call 206-684-0500 for Senior Information and Assistance.

Mark Your Calendar!

Age 55+ Employment Resource Center Job Search Workshops

Date: Friday, May 20, 2011
Thursday, June 16, 2011
Thursday, July 21, 2011

Time: 10:00 a.m.–12 noon

Place: Central Building, 810 3rd Ave. (between Columbia & Marion)

Info: Call 206-684-0500, e-mail seniors@seattle.gov or visit www.seattle.gov/seniors.

Open to Seattle-King County residents age 55 and over. Job counselors will discuss job-related computer classes, job coaching, a job list, and other services. Eligible low-income job seekers will learn about the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP). Job seekers will also learn about Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens' one-stop core services and resources.

Mayors' Office for Senior Citizens 2011 Senior Coffee Hours Dates 3rd Thursdays from 10 to 11 a.m.

**May 19
June 16
July 21
August 18**

**September 15
October 20
November 17**

Coffee hours are held in the Central Building's 4th Floor Board Room 810 3rd Avenue (between Columbia & Marion streets).

For more information, call 206-684-0500 or go to www.seattle.gov/seniors on the Web.

Dates and speakers subject to change.

Planning and living with a secure retirement

by Jean Setzfand, Director, Financial Security, AARP Education and Outreach



Planning for a secure retirement is more complicated than it used to be. Many of us can't count on a pension from our employer, and some of us will continue to work, at least part-time, for money and for fun after retiring from our primary nine-to-five. That makes saving for secure retirement a lot different than saving for material items.

When you want to buy a house or a car, you probably can actually see the goal you have in mind, and that helps you plan and save enough to achieve the goal. You know exactly what you want, how much it will cost and what you need to do financially to make it yours. The same should be true for your retirement. If you can't visualize where you're heading, it's hard to save enough money to make sure that you get there. In fact, it's not enough to just save money; you need to plot your path to and through retirement.

Retirement is a goal to be relished, not dreaded, and it often brings huge lifestyle changes —changes in schedule, routine, where you live and with whom you spend your time. Visualizing your life in retirement will help you identify what brings you peace of mind and how you can achieve it.

To live well in retirement, think about your desired lifestyle and personal priorities. You may want to travel, indulge your green thumb, volunteer, start a new business or spend more time with your

grandchildren. In preparation for a secure retirement, ask yourself how your retirement will impact your work, hobbies, entertainment, health, family, housing, leisure activities and financial situation.

Once you've envisioned the lifestyle you want for retirement, you'll need to figure out how much it will cost and what steps you may need to take to achieve it. AARP's Retirement Planning Calculator can help assess your current situation and let you know if you're on track to reach your retirement goals.

The calculator will walk you through a few simple steps and includes the ability to develop a retirement plan for a dual-income home, as well as calculate individual Social Security benefit estimates as a part of retirement income. It provides easy-to-navigate tabs, an easy-to-understand explanation of where you are currently in your retirement planning process and the ability to experiment with various retirement scenarios to create a plan that is right for you.

You can find the AARP Retirement Calculator online at www.aarp.org/retirementcalculator. Once you've completed the calculator you will be referred to additional AARP resources based on your situation.

The decision of when and how to retire is a very personal one, but these resources are designed to help you make informed decisions and to get or stay on track for living well in retirement.

Steps for Living Well in Retirement:

- Download AARP Resources at www.aarp.org/orderfinancialpubs.
- **Use AARP's Retirement Planning Calculator** at www.aarp.org/retirementcalculator to estimate how much income you'll need in retirement.

Healthy living and cancer prevention

by Jodi Olson, Public Health - Seattle & King County

A healthy diet and lifestyle are important throughout our lives, but particularly important during cancer treatment and to reduce the risk for recurrence. There are many factors that contribute to why a person develops or doesn't develop cancer. Environmental pollutants and occupational exposure, tobacco use and hereditary factors all play a big part. Nutrition, physical activity and obesity can impact the development of approximately 35% of all cancers. The following guidelines can help you modify how you eat and exercise.

Cancer survivors should follow the same diet recommendations for cancer prevention

We live in a fad-diet society. People tend to think there is a special diet for every medical condition. We should aim to meet nutritional needs through diet alone rather than dietary supplements. The best advice that experts have known for a long time is now backed by research. Choose food from the colors of the rainbow and be sure to include fruits, vegetables, beans, legumes, nuts and seeds. Focus on whole foods, not processed foods. Choose apples, not apple juice; whole grains, not flour-based foods. By supporting the body with good nutrition, it can be amazingly resilient. Focusing on optimal blood sugar regulation and an anti-inflammatory diet — a diet that includes six to nine servings of whole fruits and vegetables, small

amounts of healthy fat like olive oil, healthy proteins like fish and organic chicken. This type of diet is health-promoting for prevention of cancer, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and many other conditions.

Be as lean as possible within the normal range of body weight

Know your Body Mass Index (BMI) and what it means for you. Fat, especially around your middle, promotes inflammation, impairs normal insulin/glucose response and increases estrogen — all of which are not great things that can interfere with normal physiology.

Be physically active

Physical activity is essential to achieving ideal body weight and reducing the problems mentioned above that excess fat causes. A healthy diet and exercise together provide the greatest reduction of excess fat. Daily physical activity, or at least five times a week, is best for your body.

Eat food of plant origin and limit consumption of fatty foods and avoid sugary drinks

A diet rich with plant food is a diet high in fiber, vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and is an anti-inflammatory diet that provides the food most beneficial to help fight cancer. High-fiber foods fill you up and keep your body feeling less hungry. Empty calories (no nutritional value), like 16 ounces of soda has 10 to 12 teaspoons of sugar.



CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

Limit intake of red meat and processed meats

Animal foods in general tend to be higher in the omega-6 fatty acids known to promote inflammation. Add more fish and other lean sources of protein to your diet.

Limit alcoholic drinks

Alcoholic drinks are linked to increased risk in some cancers. Opinions about daily consumption vary, consider moderation and skip having a drink with dinner every night. Make having a drink a special occasion.

Breast feeding is protective against breast cancer

Breastfeeding has protective value for the mother (decrease risk of breast cancer) and the baby (child is less likely to be overweight).

It's important to remember that these are guidelines and that it only is a part of what determines who will get or not get cancer. For example, not every person who smokes gets cancer and not every woman exposed to the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) gets cervical cancer. Scientists believe that some protective genes and other factors such as eating fruits and vegetables may help prevent diseases.

Remember to get regular cancer screenings. Make this a commitment throughout your life and your family's life. For more information about diet and cancer prevention, go to www.aicr.org.

Can We Help You?

“Our Job is Serving People”



City of Seattle
Mike McGinn, Mayor
Human Services Department
Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens



- **Utility Assistance Programs**
- **Age 55+ Employment Resource Center**
- **Seniors Training Seniors Computer Classes**
- **Senior Information and Assistance**
- **Gold Card for Healthy Aging & FLASH Card**

For more information, call 206-684-0500,
e-mail seniors@seattle.gov or
visit www.seattle.gov/seniors.

Accommodations for people with disabilities provided upon request.

Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens

810 3rd Ave Suite 350
Seattle, WA 98104

PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
SEATTLE, WA
PERMIT NO.
1046

Read the latest edition of **Spotlight**, the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens' newsletter. In this issue:

- We need to hear from you - 2011 Area Plan on Aging Questionnaire
- Changing faces at seattle senior centers
- Exercise for the body and brain
- Senior Information and Assistance - sharing knowledge among older adults
- Planning and living with a secure retirement
- Healthy living and cancer prevention



Save water and save money!

Toilets are the biggest water-user in most homes. Replacing old toilets with high efficiency models can save a family of four up to 24,000 gallons of water and \$140 each year.

But toilets cost money, and so do plumbers, right?

You can qualify for free toilets AND installation by a licensed professional plumber, if you meet the following criteria and income guidelines:

- You are a homeowner of any age with a Seattle Public Utilities account.
- You currently live in the home you own.
- Your existing toilets were manufactured before 1994.
- You meet income guidelines for your household size (examples below).

Household Size	Annual Income	Monthly Income
1	\$ 30,036	\$ 2,503
2	\$ 39,276	\$ 3,273
3	\$ 48,516	\$ 4,043
4	\$ 57,756	\$ 4,813
5	\$ 66,996	\$ 5,583
6	\$ 76,236	\$ 6,353

For more information ...

Contact Minor Home Repair at 206-448-5751 (TTY 206-448-5025) or e-mail the City of Seattle's Utility Discount Program at UDP@seattle.gov. Don't wait, call or e-mail today, and you can save water and save money!

Spotlight

is published two times a year by the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens.

The Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens, part of Seattle/King County Aging and Disability Services and the Seattle Human Services Department, complies with all federal, state, and local laws prohibiting discrimination.

Accommodations for persons with disabilities will be provided upon request.

Selina Chow,
Interim Director
Cynthia Ellison, Editor

Phone (206) 684-0500

TTY (206) 233-2778

Fax: (206) 684-0494

Email:

cynthia.ellison@seattle.gov

Web:

www.seattle.gov/seniors